

## HUMAN VALUES & PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

**About the Author:** *Arnold Joseph Toynbee (1889 – 1975) was a British historian, research professor and author of numerous books. He is best known for his 12-volume A Study of History, through which he examined the rise and fall of 26 civilizations in the course of human history, and he concluded that they rose by responding successfully to challenges under the leadership of creative minorities composed of elite leaders.*

**Introduction:** *Arnold Toynbee gave a lecture on the human values and ethics of the Indian people during independence struggle. In that lecture he appreciated Indian attitude towards life and approach to the handling of human affairs. Human values are a set of consistent behaviors and measures that guide human beings in doing what is right and acceptable by the society. They attract dignity, respect and appropriateness among people. Professional ethics relate to the rules governing the conduct, transactions and relationships within a profession and among its publics.*

### **Human Values and Ethics adopted during the Indian independence struggle:**

*According to Toynbee, Human Values and Ethics adopted during the Indian independence struggle*

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*were unlike any other country's revolution. Some of the concepts were: Nonviolence, Civil disobedience and Non-cooperation. After getting the freedom Indians never brood over the past or nurse their grievances. Inviting a British to deliver a lecture resembles their attitude and their professional ethics. Toynbee also quoted that we are all living in an age in which technology can destroy entire world.*

*Though all are physically neighbors, but psychologically strangers to one another. Mutual destruction depends on how we are going to react. We have to love our neighbors as precious members of the human family, which is now exposed to the common danger of being wiped out by atomic warfare. In 1945 the atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. All must live together like a single family. We must love our neighbours. Variety in unity is a great Indian achievement. There must be amity among all sections of people. Another great Indian achievement is the combination of hard practical work and contemplation.*

**Indian People's Freedom from Rancor:** *One Indian virtue that greatly impressed Toynbee and touched him greatly was the Indian people's freedom from rancor. Indians never hate their adversaries. After a successful struggle, they do not brood over the past*

and nurse grievances. They do not hate the British and Muslims who ruled India. Indians were inspired by Gandhiji to keep the freedom struggle on a spiritual plane above the level of mere politics. Non-violent revolution is a characteristic Indian accomplishment.

The spirit of non-violence is a state of feeling inspired by moral ideal. The people must live in harmony. A broad-minded approach to reality is characteristic of India. Indians tolerate the ways of the others. Appreciation of variety is an object lesson of great value for the rest of the world in this atomic age. Technology has removed distances. According to Toynbee, the new field of action in India's domestic life that non-violent revolution has found is that Bhoodan movement, a voluntary land reform movement in India started in 1951 and he alleged that Ashoka substituted religious propaganda for military aggression.

**Gandhiji's Unique Achievements:** Arnold Toynbee gives an account of the unique achievements of the Indian people under the leadership of Gandhiji. These achievements are of very great value to the whole world in the present atomic age. Gandhi's vision for the country and his dreams for the community as a whole still hold good for India. He got the community to assimilate and reflect true values of humanity and to participate in tasks that would promote the greater good. These issues are still relevant to what free India is and represents.

The main cause of worry today is intolerance and hatred leading to violence and it is here the values of Gandhi need to be followed to with more passion. He is relevant not yesterday or today but forever. Gandhiji was benefactor to not only to India but also Britain. He made it impossible for Britain to go on ruling India but he made it possible for Britain to withdraw without disgrace. He saved both Britain and India from one of the commonest tragedies of history.

**Conclusion:** According to Toynbee, Gandhiji proved that spiritual activity and practical can go together. The spiritual gift of contemplation makes Man human. This gift is still in Indian souls. It saves mankind from self-destruction. He dreamed that of ethics and values practiced in daily lives. He dreamed of a new world of non-violence with overall peaceful environment. Non-violence is a universal phenomenon and it has great relevance and significance. It is the ultimate solution of all kinds of problems and conflicts in the society, nation and world.

## THE LAST LEAF

**About the Author:** William Sydney Porter (1862 – 1910), known by his pen name **O. Henry**, was an American writer. O. Henry's short stories are known for their wit, wordplay, warm characterization, and clever twist endings. Most of O. Henry's stories are set in his own time, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many take place in New York City and deal for the most part with ordinary people.

### **The Last Leaf Summary:**

**Sudie & Johnsy:** Greenwich Village is an old town where people enthralled by paintings and arts. At the topmost floor of a squeaky three-story building lived Sue and Johnsy. Johnsy's full name was Joanna and Sudie fondly called Sue. They met at a restaurant where they found out that they share the same interests when it comes to art and food. While Sue belongs to Maine, Johnsy belongs to California. They set up a joint studio. Six months after in November, pneumonia spread like an epidemic in the artist colony. One after another, the inhabitants came under the spell of this disease. The virulent pneumonia quickly made the frail-bodied Johnsy bed-ridden. With a pallid face, she lay helplessly on her iron bed looking vacantly at the outside sky through the Dutch window. Johnsy's condition deteriorated fast. Seeing that her friend was slipping dangerously, Sue called in

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the over-stretched doctor to see her friend Johnsy lying hopelessly sick.

She had very little chance to live, and Sue was saddened. The doctor informs Sue that Johnsy has only one chance in ten and that one chance is for her to have a strong desire to live. Medicine can cure only half the disease and the other half depends on the will power of the patient. Saying this, the doctor asked if the patient had any unfulfilled desire. Sue answered that Johnsy had wanted to paint the Bay of Naples one day. The doctor was somewhat un-convinced at this. He asked if Johnsy had any young man in mind. Johnsy lay in her bed motionless, like deadwood. Sue quickly replied in the negative.

Sue arranged for Johnsy's diet and began to draw a pen sketch for a story. The sketch Sue was drawing pertained to a cowboy from Idaho with his typical trousers and monocle. Just then, she heard a low, muffled sound that appeared to be a count-down exercise. Quite perplexed, Sue rushed to her friend's bedside. Johnsy lay there motionless staring at something outside and counting backwards. In her faint voice, she counted 12, 11, 10 and so on. Johnsy was staring through the window watching leaves fall from a vine on the opposite building wall. Johnsy said that if the last leaf on the Ivy vine fell, she would pass away. Her dream of painting the Bay of Naples would not be fulfilled. Sue went on to do an

art piece, while she requested Johnsy not to look at what she was painting. Sue asked Johnsy to let her finish her incomplete art work. Sue was keen to get her fees from the client. Johnsy was unmoved. She continued her count down despite being admonished by her friend. She seemed to be seeing death almost knocking at her door. She said she was waiting for the last leaf to fall so that she could depart. She suggested Sue to move to the other room so that she could continue her count down. Sue said she would be at her friend's bedside. She insisted that Johnsy must stop the counting. She preceded and called Behrman who protected them like their watch dog.

**Behrman:** Behrman was an old painter staying in Greenwich Village, hoping to paint his masterpiece one day. For twenty five years he had been trying to do it, but he did not begin it yet. He had a long beard like that of Moses. For forty years he had been painting without achieving anything. He was a failure in art. He was earning a little money by serving as a model to young artists. He used to drink gin excessively. He was burly, and posed as the self-appointed protector of the two women artists living in the first floor. Sue found Behrman in his dimly lit studio in the ground floor. Sue narrated how Johnsy had been lying in her sick bed with her obsession with the last leaf in the vine that stood between her and her death. He ridiculed Johnsy for her idiomatic imaginations. In spite of his old age, he braves a storm one night to paint a

leaf on the wall — a leaf that will never fall. That night, during a bad storm destined to tear the last leaf from the tree, Old Behrman, regardless of the cold, wet night paints a vivid leaf on the outdoor vine to restore the dying Johnsy's hope to live. The last leaf ignited Johnsy's life again.

**Johnsy's Life & Behrman's Death:** Johnsy was light and fragile like a leaf. The next morning she saw the last leaf intact. It did not fall. The next day, the last leaf is still on the vine. And, the next day, it's still there. She found a new life and asked for some broth and milk. Johnsy begins to improve. The doctor visits and gives her a much better chance of survival. But, he lets her know that the old man downstairs is now stricken with pneumonia. They found Behrman in his room sick, wet, and cold. Outside was a ladder and his palette of paints where he had painted a single leaf on the wall. It was the last leaf that had given hope to the sick girl Johnsy which had given her the will to live. However, old Behrman died of pneumonia during the night. The painted leaf that saved Johnsy was his master piece. The rain and the snow caused in him pneumonia resulting in his death.

**Conclusion:** Sue instructed Johnsy to look at the window, and ask her why she thinks that the last leaf never fell. It never fell because it was Behrman's masterpiece, and he painted it the night the last leaf fell. The Last Leaf speaks highly of the sincere lasting friendship just as the evergreen ivy

*leaf, and the noble spirit of selfless sacrifice. It is a symbol of sacrifice like the cross on which Jesus was crucified in order to save the sinners.*